

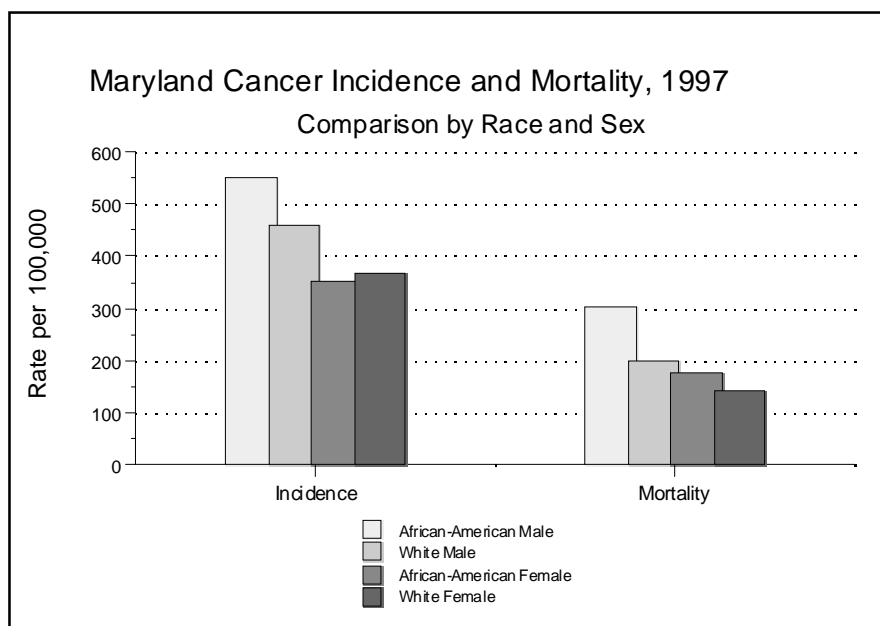
CONQUERING CANCER IN MARYLAND



Problem

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Maryland. In 1998, Maryland had the eighth highest cancer death rate compared to other states in the nation. One in every five deaths in Maryland is due to cancer. Overall cancer mortality had been level for many years in both the U.S. and Maryland until 1990, when the overall cancer death rate started to decline in both the U.S. and Maryland. The cancer mortality rate in Maryland has been significantly higher than the U.S. and is above the rate for the U.S. Healthy People 2010 objective.

In 1997, 24,305 Marylanders were diagnosed with cancer, and 10,092 Maryland residents died of cancer. The incidence of cancer overall is higher among African-American males than white males; white females have a higher incidence of cancer than African-American females. Overall cancer mortality is higher among African-American males and African-American females than among white males and white females, respectively.



Source: Maryland Cancer Registry, 1997

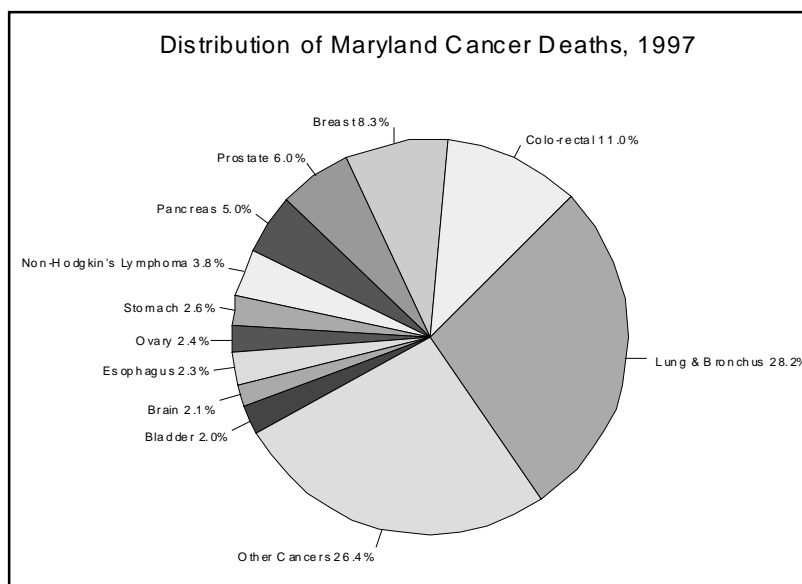
Note: Rates per 100,000; Age-adjusted to 1970.

Determinants

Most cancer deaths in Maryland are lung, colon and rectum, breast, and prostate cancer. In 1997, Maryland has the 17th highest lung cancer mortality rate, the 3rd highest colon and rectum mortality rate, the 7th highest breast cancer mortality rate, and the 9th highest prostate cancer mortality rate compared to other states in the nation. The seven most commonly diagnosed cancers in Maryland are cancers of the breast, prostate, lung and bronchus, colon and rectum, bladder, melanoma of the skin, and oral cavity and pharynx.

In 1997, 17 of 24 jurisdictions in Maryland had cancer mortality rates that were higher than the nation, eleven of which had overall cancer mortality rates that were significantly higher than the U.S. rates. These jurisdictions include Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Harford, Prince Georges, St. Mary's, Somerset, and Wicomico counties.

Controlled clinical trials demonstrated that mortality from colorectal and breast cancer can be reduced with early detection. Screening for cancer of the oral cavity and skin can also detect cancer at an early, treatable stage. Screening of cervical cancer can detect precancerous changes on the cervix and completely avoid development of invasive cervical cancer. Implementing early detection programs for these cancers can have a significant impact on reducing mortality.

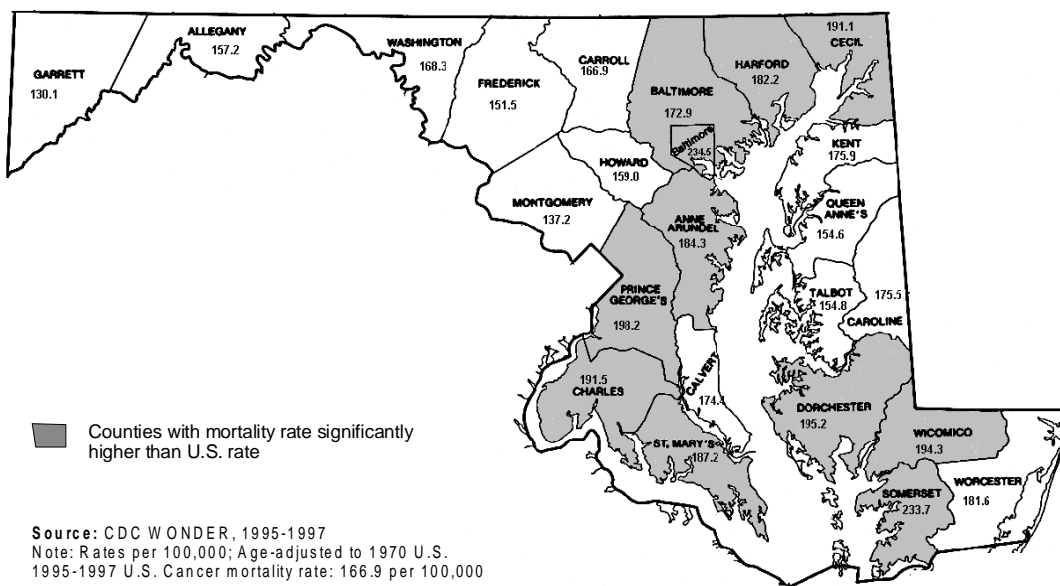


Source: Maryland Cancer Registry, 1997

There is currently no cost-effective method to detect lung cancers at an early stage; therefore, the best intervention to reduce deaths due to lung cancer is tobacco use prevention and cessation.

The major risk factor in the development of skin cancer is exposure to the sun or ultraviolet light. Skin cancers can be prevented by limiting exposure to the sun and artificial sources of light and by protecting the skin from the sun. A diet high in fiber, fruits, and vegetables and low in fat may reduce the risk of developing colon and some other cancers. Encouraging the public to adopt these dietary behaviors could reduce the incidence of certain cancers.

Cancer Mortality Rates for Maryland Counties, 1995-1997



During its 2000 session, the Maryland legislature established the Cigarette Restitution Fund Program (CRFP) in the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The CRFP is leading the State’s efforts to control cancer in coordination with a broad array of statewide and local cancer control advocates.

Objective 1 - By 2010, to reduce cancer deaths to a rate of no more than 103 per 100,000 persons.

Objective 2 - By 2010, to eliminate the disparity in cancer deaths between ethnic minorities and whites and between rural and urban geographic areas.

Action Steps

- ⇒ Prevent the use of tobacco products among children, and decrease smoking among both children and adults.
- ⇒ Increase early detection and treatment of colon, breast, prostate, cervical, oral, and skin cancer.
- ⇒ Promote diets high in fiber, fruits and vegetables and low in fat.
- ⇒ Promote skin cancer prevention by limiting exposure to the sun and artificial sources of light and by protecting the skin from the sun.
- ⇒ Focus initiatives on education, screening, early diagnosis, treatment and supportive care among ethnic minorities, and rural and medically underserved communities.

Partners

American Lung Association of Maryland • Cancer Advocacy Groups • Center for Cancer Surveillance and Control, DHMH • Centers for Disease Control and Prevention • Johns Hopkins University Medical Systems • Maryland Chapter of the American Cancer Society • Maryland community hospitals • Maryland Department of the Environment • Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) • Maryland General Assembly • Maryland Local Health Departments • Med Chi—the Maryland State Medical Society • National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health • University of Maryland Medical Systems

Cross-Reference Table for Cancer	
See Also	
Cecil County	180